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ABSTRACT

A newsletter titled "Focus" was published to disseminate significant current or previous Section 353 special demonstration projects in Pennsylvania. The project involved a review of previous exemplary projects, validation of 49 significant projects, and dissemination of them. Twenty special projects from Pennsylvania and the nation were selected as exemplary based on a five-point scale for innovation, effectiveness, adaptability, and quality of final report. Six additional projects with outstanding components were accorded an honorable mention. The following topics were featured in 1998 Focus bulletins: family literacy, program improvement, staff development, special populations, and life skills. The project validated 49 projects previously identified as exemplary, including 24 that needed no revision, in the following areas: English as a second language, counseling, life skills, program improvement, workplace, and staff development. A readers' survey included in the May issue of Focus yielded a 6% response, indicating a 92% favorable rating for the publication. (The five Focus bulletins are appended.) (YLB)

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FOCUS on Promising Practices

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FY 1997-1998
#99-8014 $29,040
Sherry Royce, Project Director
Royce & Royce, Inc.
1938 Crooked Oak Drive Lancaster, PA 17601
V:717-569-1663 F:717-560-9903

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ABSTRACT – FOCUS on Promising Practices

Grant Recipient: Dr. Sherry Royce
Royce & Royce, Inc.
1938 Crooked Oak Drive, Lancaster, PA 17601

Project No. 98-8014
Grant Allowance: $29,040
July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998

Grant Director: Dr. Sherry Royce

PROJECT PURPOSE:

FOCUS on Promising Practices provided a publication for the effective and statewide dissemination of significant current or previous Section 353 special demonstration projects. It conducted a review of previous exemplary projects, validated 49 significant project, and disseminated them.

PROJECT OUTCOMES:

Twenty special projects from Pennsylvania and the nation were selected as exemplary based on a five-point scale for Innovation, Effectiveness, Adaptability, and quality of Final Report. Six additional projects with outstanding components were accorded an Honorable Mention. Areas pertinent to adult education practitioners featured in 1998 Focus bulletins were Family Literacy, Program Improvement, Staff Development, Special Populations, and Life Skills. Focus validated 49 projects previously identified as exemplary in the areas of ESL, Counseling, Life Skills, Program Improvement, Workplace, and Staff Development, including 24 that needed no revision. The categories for validated products established in FY1997-98 were modified to address: 1) administrators (program improvement); 2) staff development (trainers); learner resources (teachers) while retaining the assessment, counseling, family literacy, ESL, and workplace categories which address specific audiences or specific functions.

IMPACT

In its reader survey, ***FOCUS*** exactly repeated its 1997 ratings, the highest in its 14 year history. It received a total of 13.83 out of a possible 15 points, or a 92% favorable rating. Contacts with AdvancE, the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, and special project directors indicated that there were 185 requests for projects featured in Focus Bulletins.

PRODUCTS

Five issues of ***FOCUS*** were produced and distributed and an annotated listing of 49 validated projects downloaded to Pennsylvania's six Professional Development Centers (PDC's).

PROJECT CONTINUATION

The Focus project will continue this year's practice of holding its review meeting in January and will publish five issues of ***FOCUS*** between January and May of 1999.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a Feasibility Study be undertaken to determine which validated special projects/products in the areas of Assessment, Recruitment and Retention, ESL and Learner Resources should be revised, in what format, who shall be involved in the task, and what cost will be incurred.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of federally-funded ABE special projects in FY 1975-76, Pennsylvania has produced nearly 1,200 special demonstration and staff development projects. As the number of Pennsylvania's projects increased, it became necessary to develop a process to review and evaluate each year's products so that exemplary projects could be identified and adapted by other Pennsylvania programs. For 14 of the past 22 years, the Bureau of ABLE has funded Focus to conduct the review and evaluation of its special projects. To date, Focus has identified 153 outstanding projects produced by Pennsylvania practitioners and cited 36 projects as honorable mentions. In FY1995-96, Focus extended its scope by soliciting, reviewing and publishing information in Focus Bulletins about other state's exemplary special projects. Since then, 34 projects from other states were cited as exemplary and 26 received an Honorable Mention.

This year, 20 special projects from Pennsylvania and the nation were selected as exemplary based on a five-point scale for Innovation, Effectiveness, Adaptability, and quality of Final Report. Along with six additional projects accorded an Honorable Mention. These projects were highlighted in five Focus bulletins addressing the areas of Family Literacy, Program Improvement, Staff Development, Special Populations, and Life Skills.

In FY1996-1997, Focus validated 47 projects previously identified as exemplary in the areas of Assessment, Curriculum, Family Literacy, Learning Differences, Recruitment and Retention, Staff Development, and Technology. This year the Focus panel completed its review of exemplary projects and validated 49 past projects in the areas of Family Literacy, Program Improvement, Staff Development, Special Populations, and Life Skills, including 18 that needed no revision. An annotated listing of Fy 1997-98 validated projects is enclosed with the Final Report.

The validation of prior exemplary projects from Pennsylvania and other states took place at the Focus panel meeting in August 1997. A review of current projects was conducted by the Focus panel in January 1998. Five issues of Focus Bulletins were published between January and May 1998. A database of validated projects was downloaded to Pennsylvania's six PDC's in March 1998. Member of the Focus panel met in April to consider the question of what to do with validated projects that needed revisions. The recommendations made at this meeting provided the foundation for the Feasibility Study to be conducted as part of the FY 1998-99 Focus project.

Project director, Sherry Royce, holds an Ed.D. in Adult Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. She has been involved in Pennsylvania adult education since 1967 as an ABLE program and project director and has directed 44 special projects, including

the FY1984-96 Focus projects. She also served as a member of the USDOE's Adult Education and Lifelong Learning (ADELL) Clearinghouse that conducted a national evaluation of special projects.

All Focus panel members have served in this capacity in the past, namely: Bootsie Barbour, Rose Brandt, Carol Goertzel, Joan Leopold, Carol Molek, Sandy Strunk, Jeff Woodyard, and Rachel Zilcosky. Their expertise includes program administration and staff development; ESL, ABE, and GED instruction; volunteer and literacy management and training; family and workplace programs; and service to special populations such as learning disabled, seniors and institutionalized adults. All of the panelists have produced 353 projects deemed exemplary.

As a homebound staff development vehicle, *Focus* provides Bureau of ABLE staff, local program administrators and staff, and Pennsylvania's PDC's with information about outstanding practices that can be replicated to meet the needs of the state, the region, or of local program participants and staff. In FY1999-98, five ***Focus*** bulletins were distributed to over 2000 adult literacy and basic education practitioners in the Commonwealth including all ABE/ESL/GED and Act 143 Literacy programs as well as the ABLE state task force; the 353 review committee and 353 project directors; all librarians and legislators in the Commonwealth. Bulletins were also sent to all state departments of education, to state, regional and national adult education clearinghouses, and to out-of-state practitioners whose projects were featured in *Focus*. Additional copies of Focus were distributed to the AdvancE Clearinghouse, the Western Adult Education Literacy Resource Center, and all Pennsylvania PDCs. In addition, Focus Bulletins have been uploaded to Pennsylvania's internet ABLESite, thus increasing the nation's awareness of the scope, quality and effectiveness of Pennsylvania's ABLE programs

Five copies of this final report were provided to the Bureau of ABLE. This report is available from Clearinghouse AdvancE, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 11th Floor, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333. Phone from Pennsylvania: 800-992-2283. Out of State telephone: 717-783-9192. Fax: 717-783-5420

BODY OF THE REPORT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this project was to prepare and publish a newsletter whose purpose is the effective and statewide dissemination of current exemplary Section 353 special demonstration projects. A secondary goal is to complete the validation of significant projects from previous years and provide PDCs with a database of these projects. In support of these goals, this project will fulfill the following objectives:

1. Identify and review recent special projects from ABLE practitioners in Pennsylvania and other states, and feature these exemplary projects in five Focus Bulletins.
2. Review special projects previously classified as exemplary to determine which projects are still significant.
3. Provide PDC's with a database of significant special projects.
4. Evaluate Focus Bulletins via reader surveys, Clearinghouse and local project director records of requests for projects featured in Focus.

PROCEDURES

A. Selection and Publication of Current Exemplary Projects

The following procedures were employed to identify and evaluate current exemplary projects and to highlight them in five issues of Focus.

The project coordinator reviewed Pennsylvania's FY1995-1996 special projects not evaluated previously and all FY1996-97 projects and classified them in appropriate categories. She contacted ABLE state directors, regional and national ABLE clearinghouses, and asked them to submit recommendations of their states' exemplary projects relevant to the topic areas to be covered in the 1998 Focus Bulletins. Both Pennsylvania and out-of-state special projects were obtained and sent to the Focus panel for review.

An evaluation session took place at PDE on January 12, 1998. Panel members used Pennsylvania's evaluation and utilization worksheets to screen, identify, rate, and determine the best usage for projects they deemed exemplary. During the morning session, teams that had read the same projects discussed and agreed upon their selections for outstanding projects and honorary mentions in their assigned categories. In the afternoon, each group presented their selections for exemplary programs to the FOCUS panel.

The Focus editor reviewed the Focus Panel's comments and examined each recommended project. Five Focus Bulletins (See Bulletins enclosed with Final Report) were prepared. Each issue had a theme (i.e. Family Literacy) and featured articles describing exemplary projects related to that theme. Each article identified components of the project, detailed results and/or products, recommended how the project or products might best be used, and provided ratings as to the project's effectiveness, innovation, adaptability and final report. Focus was prepared copy-ready in the Royce & Royce office using a template provided by Project Axis. Each issue was reviewed, "tweaked," and illustrations added by Axis editor, Tana Reiff, before being sent to the publisher. Table A on page 4 lists the articles in the 1998 Focus Bulletins.

Between January and May 1997, five Focus Bulletins were mailed to administrators and staff of all PDE Bureau of ABLE programs and special projects; ABLE special task forces and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor Single Point of Contact (SPOC) agencies. Focus Bulletins were sent to members of post-secondary educational institutions, public housing authorities and community-based organizations dealing with ABLE clients. Focus Bulletins were disseminated to state and national ABLE clearinghouses and all State Department of Education (SDE) Adult Basic Education directors as well as all state legislators, public libraries and adult education advocates in the Commonwealth. Focus Bulletins were also uploaded to Pennsylvania's ABLENET website.

B. Review and Validation of Previously-Cited Exemplary Projects

Using the evaluation and utilization worksheets developed in FY1996-97, the Focus panel reviewed 86 special projects cited as exemplary that were developed between 1989 and 1995, reviewed and validated 49 projects in the areas of ESL, Counseling, Life Skills, Program Improvement, Workplace, and Staff Development, including 24 that needed no revision. A midyear review of validated projects led to a reclassification system. In examining the process of getting exemplary projects out to the field, the question was asked: "Who will benefit from using them?"

The answer led to a simplification of categories so they would address: 1) administrators (program improvement); 2) staff development (trainers); learner resources (teachers). Assessment; counseling; family literacy; ESL; and workplace were kept as categories because they addressed either specific audiences or specific functions. The 119 projects validated in 1997 and 1998 were then entered into a FileMaker data base with serves both PC and MAC systems and sent out via e-mail to all professional development centers.

It was also recommended that a Feasibility Study be conducted to determine which validated special projects/products in the areas of Assessment, Recruitment and Retention, ESL and Learner Resources should be revised, in what format, who shall be involved in the task, and what cost will be incurred

OBJECTIVES MET

1. All **Goal 1 Objectives** dealing with the selection and publication of current exemplary projects were completed satisfactorily.
2. All **Goal 2 Objectives** dealing with the validation of previous exemplary projects were completed satisfactorily.
3. All **Goal 3 Objectives** dealing with the provision of a database of significant 353 projects to the professional development centers were completed satisfactorily.

NEGATIVE RESULTS

All objectives were completed satisfactorily. There were no unexpected nor negative results from the project.

PROJECT EVALUATION

A. The Reader Survey

The May issue of FOCUS contained a Reader Survey. The survey netted about a 6% return with 53% of those responding coming from Pennsylvania and the remainder from the states of California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia. Readers showed a wide diversity in their positions and responsibilities.

Reader Statistics. Forty-six percent of respondents stated they were administrators or project directors. Some 21% were instructors and 5% counselors, which represents the highest response from practitioners since this survey was initiated in 1984. One quarter of the 32 % involved in staff or curriculum development considered themselves trainers, while the remainder listed staff development and or curriculum development duties among their responsibilities. Among the 13% who listed responsibilities in the Other category, one was a family literacy specialist, two were university professors involved in ABLE research, development and training, one was the CEO of a Training Corps, and one a state librarian who circulates Focus tidbits to her grantees, over 100 yearly. The 6% over 100% in this category is reflective of the multiple duties assumed by adult educators.

For the first time in Focus' history, the largest number of respondents, 28% came from community based organizations. Local Educational Agencies claimed another 19% followed by Literacy Councils with 17%. The remaining 26% were split among community colleges and universities, institutions, the public sector, and other. The 17% listed as Other came from state departments of education, state libraries, and state and regional adult literacy resource centers indicating a high interest in Focus among those responsible for staff development in other states.

Thirty-five percent of all respondents identified ABE/GED funds as their major source of revenue; 28% cited Pennsylvania's Act 143 funds; 21% listed state funds, and the remaining 16% identified grants from Foundations, the Labor Department, Title I, and Medicare as part of their funding base.

Reader Interests. When asked to rate the five FOCUS issues as to the topics that were most interesting and useful to them, as in previous years, program improvement was a clear favorite followed by staff development. Bunched a full point away were life skills, special populations, and then family literacy. Comments such as "All the issues were excellent." indicate some degree of interest in all areas.

FOCUS Effectiveness Rating. A four point rating scale was used to evaluate the FOCUS Bulletins with 0 as the lowest possible rating and three as the highest. A comparison of the FOCUS 1998 ratings with previous FOCUS evaluations shows consistency over time. Out of a possible 15 points in five areas, FOCUS 98 received an average score of 13.8 or a 92% percent favorable rating, exactly the same percentage as in its two previous years.

TABLE I: FOCUS RATINGS 1984-1998

CHARACTERISTICS	1998	1997	1996	1994	1992	1990	1988	1986	1984
Understandable	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8
Organized	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.8
Informative	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.8
Interesting	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
Useful	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.3
TOTAL	**2.79**	**2.79**	**2.76**	**2.64**	**2.66**	**2.74**	**2.66**	**2.62**	**2.66**

B. Clearinghouse Records and Project Director Reports

In publications, as in any product, the real test of effectiveness is: Does it meet the function for which it was intended? In Focus' case, the object is dissemination of promising practices and survey respondents indicated that they had requested 93 special projects. A listing of AdvancE and The Western Adult Literacy Center record plus responses from local project directors indicates a record number of 185 requests for projects featured in Focus from February to June of 1998.

Reader Comments. The following comments by FOCUS responders provide a rough idea of the various reasons FOCUS has remained valuable to ABLE practitioners for over 12 years.

> I find the descriptions of the projects and their ratings very helpful in planning curriculum materials. Both the editor and format person deserve a hearty "congratulations."

> I checked 1 for useful although the 1 is a criticism of my lack of follow through. An article is intriguing but I do nothing about it.

Job well done!

I like the yellow paper - makes it easy to read and keep track of.

Please keep me on your mailing list. Dir Center for ALL, Maine

I depend on this to "focus" on what is new! Would be great if we all had time to search and sort, but reality is that we need you to do the primary job.

I have requested many "353" projects from AdvancE and have always found useful information and/or suggestions.

I enjoy reading the newsletters; they keep me aware of what's happening.

I find this user-friendly newsletter very useful.

Excellent publication! Keep up the good work.

Right to the point with no fooling around.

Although I see some duplication of The Buzz information in Focus, they are both useful.

Excellent work, Sherry. Thanks. Lennox McLendon, State Director, Virginia

An excellent publication - concise and targeted to issues important to us.

All the issues were excellent. I look forward to receiving your thought-provoking and informative publication and passing on something from every issues to our grantees (over 100 yearly!). Thanks for sharing. Connie Miller, Il State Library

I often request copies of the recommended products which are included in the bulletin from the original developer. I offer to trade ALRI materials (and send a list of our current publications). Or is ask for purchase information. This has mixed results. I would like purchasing information and more complete addtresses. (NW community college requests never seem to get to the right office or person).

This is a great resource. I pass it on to Even Start programs and those interested in family literacy and ABE. VT. Dept. Ed. State Director

Please keep our organization of the Focus Mailing list. I like hearing about other programs; especially in family literacy.

Thanks for this newsletter. I found the information helpful. I wish you would add order information; it would save us phone calls. Or let us know if an item is not available for purchase.

Thanks for your consistently fine work. Tom Valentine, Adult Education Professor, U of GA . Please continue to send Focus.

I personally value Focus as it provides information on 353 projects that are exemplary – it saves me time.

This is one publication I do not throw away, and I almost always call at least one place each issue for more information. Nancy Sledd, PD Coordinator. WKEC, Adult Education.

Thank you for including Kentucky Competency-Based Adult Education Project in Focus. I have already received inquiries about the project from two persons who saw the description of the project in your publication.

I always find a focus on current issues and concerns which are impacting CA and other states. Innovative projects highlighted usually have direct relationship to identified needs and emerging issues in CA. Thank you for sharing, continuing to share over the years. Excellent publication. Autumn Kelter, CASAS

Currently, only I get Focus. I am the resource center for Oregon, but I plan to feature some of your choices in upcoming newsletters. Agnes Precure, OR Office of Community College Services

I love your newsletter! Please keep me on the mailing list. Dan Chao, CT Regional Education Center

This has been a wonderful tool for obtaining current resources for our center.

Project Director Comments. The following comments by project directors provides information about some of the consequences to projects of being featured in Focus:

Several similar programs (High School Diploma Programs for Adults) have been started in Pennsylvania. I have receive inquiries recently from Delaware Community College, Lancaster-Lebanon IU, Dauphin County Prison, Beaver County Community College, a Community College in Tennessee and one in Arkansas. Sam Gruber, Cumberland Valley School District

I ended up sending out all the extra copies that I had. (AdvancE also made up extra copies of "Creating a Technology Plan").
Manuel Gonzalez, Northampton Community College

Focus added to the credibility of our Family Literacy Coordinator who developed the program. She received the 1998 Literacy Professional Award from the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council
Judith Aaronson, Goodwill Literacy Initiative

I have used FOCUS in my presentations on employability modules.
Richard Gacka, NW Tricounty IU 5

Being featured in Focus has given us much more credibility in our school system which is in a state of reorganization. Helped with fundraising a lot!!
Barbara D'Emilio, DC School District

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After 14 years of publication, Focus remains a viable instrument for the dissemination of information about promising practices in the field of adult literacy and basic education. ABLE practitioners in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation look for the "bright yellow" bulletin, copy its recommendations in their newsletters, share it with colleagues, and ask to be kept on the mailing list. In 1998, Focus aired on the internet thanks to the Bureau of ABLE's web page. Projects that were evaluated as still significant were distributed to the professional development centers in the form of a searchable database and included as resources in the Bureau of ABLE's staff development modules produced this year.

The Feasibility Study that has been funded for FY 1998-99 based upon recommendations made by this year's Focus panel will perform a service long overdue. It will examine validated projects in the areas of Assessment, ESL, Learner Resources and Recruitment and Retention and determine which special projects/products in these areas should be revised, in what format, who shall be involved in the task, and what cost will be incurred.

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Special Project

This Issue:
FAMILY LITERACY

FOCUS—mieln

JANUARY 1998 VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1

Featured Projects: The Tellin' Stories Project: Connecting Parents, Schools, and Communities—p.1 • Kentucky Family Literacy Quality Indicators—p.2 • Parenting Skills Through Children's Literature in Family Support Centers—p.3 • Ideas That Work for ABE/GED Family Literacy—p.3 • Health Promotion for Adult Literacy Students: Child Safety—p.4 • Still Winners—p.4

The special projects featured in FOCUS were funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education and rated according to the following criteria:

INNOVATION:
- Addresses major priorities.
- Creative use of resources.

EFFECTIVENESS:
- Objectives and outcomes are clearly stated.
- Materials are linked to results.
- Content is appropriate for the target audience.

ADAPTABILITY:
- Reports and/or curricula are clearly written.
- Little staff training is needed.

FINAL REPORT:
- Complete description of all products included.
- Readable, well-organized and well-presented.

ON A FIVE-POINT SCALE:
5 / Excellent • 4 / Superior • 3 / Good

PENNSYLVANIA PROJECTS MAY BE BORROWED FROM:
- AdvancE
Pennsylvania Dept. of Education
333 Market St. 11th Fl.
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone (from PA): (800) 992-2283
Out of state: (717) 783-9192
Fax (717) 783-5420

- When requesting a project, please refer to its name and number.
- Out-of-state projects may be requested from the project director or State Literacy Resource Center as listed in the contact.

Sherry Royce
FOCUS Editor

Tana Reiff
FOCUS Format

Project of Special Note

The Tellin' Stories Project: Connecting Parents, Schools, and Communities

Date: 1997
Agency: District of Columbia Public School System, Tellin' Stories Project, P. O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056
Contact: Barbara D'Emilio Phone: 202-238-2379

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Based at Howard University, the *Tellin' Stories* Project is in its third year of operation. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education to the DC Public Schools, it works in close collaboration with the Network of Educators on the Americas (NECA) and the DC Area Writing Project. *Tellin' Stories* links classrooms, families, and the community through the arts of bilingual storytelling, quiltmaking, writing, and illustration.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This project is based on the belief that parents are the most important teachers of children. Its basic premise is that "all parents regardless of their nationality, cultural background, native language and level of formal education have the knowledge and experience to create their own literature and serve as sources of literacy at home, in the school, and in the community."

The project is run by a multilingual, multiracial staff of two project coordinators and two parent coordinators. There is also a team of parents who tell stories in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese in schools citywide and a school-based team of 10 storytellers at McGogney School in southeast Washington, DC.

Parents taking part in the program are encouraged to:

1. work collaboratively with other parents from different linguistic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds;
2. create a school environment that values all cultures and family traditions;
3. play more active and meaningful roles in their children's classrooms and in the decision-making process of the school;
4. help develop the project as a model to be used by other communities.

The project works with teachers and schools to support school initiatives and improve school/community relations. To receive support from *Tellin' Stories*, a school must designate a school-based project liaison (classroom teacher, counselor, administrator) and identify a room where parents can meet.

Project staff do presentations, distribute literature in the schools, and work closely with teachers who invite parent storytellers to their classrooms, act as local on-site coordinators, and, at times, participate in the workshops.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Project activities for parents include workshops for parents of DC school children, storytelling training workshops, breakfasts for parents and teachers, and a Summer Storytelling Institute.

Continued on p.2

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Tellin' Stories, from p.1

WORKSHOPS

In the Parent Books Workshop, parents describe their family histories, their children, and the world around them through prose and poetry. These stories become self-published books which are incorporated into the school community.

In the Quilt of Stories workshop, parents use glue, felt, and other materials to depict a story from their life on a felt square which later becomes part of a quilt. The connection made between the squares on the quilt represents the connection forged by this activity between its participants.

In Storytelling Training, there is an emphasis on flannel board storytelling.The training includes warm-up and follow-up activities, performing techniques, and story selection, with an emphasis on multicultural stories.

PROJECT RESULTS

The outside evaluator noted increases in parents' confidence, writing ability, and communication across cultural and language barriers. Parents learned to help their children and increased their acceptance of others through sharing experiences.

Reported changes in the school environment included teachers' increasingly positive attitude toward parents and an increased parent comfort level in dealing with their children's school. One unanticipated, documented positive result was the entrance of participating parents into ESL, ABE, and GED classes.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated **Excellent** for Innovation and Adaptability and **Superior** for Final Report and Effectiveness. The Focus Panel recommended this creative project as a great recruitment tool for Family Literacy. Not only does it get parents involved in their children's schools but it encourages teachers to view parent involvement in their classrooms as a positive influence.

While it can be replicated as is, we are looking forward to the development of the affordable, feasible, easily reproducible model that has been promised.

KENTUCKY FAMILY LITERACY QUALITY INDICATORS

HONORABLE MENTION

Date: 1995

Agency: Department for Adult Educationand Literacy, Cabinet for Workforce Development, 500 Mero St., Capitol Plaza FL 3, Frankfort, KY 40601-4337

Contact: Sandra Kestner Phone: 502-564-5114

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

Family Literacy Quality Indicators were developed by a panel of experienced educators representing Family Education programs, Even Start, preschool, community education, skills training, evaluation services, county schools, and state adult education. Both the project and the 30-page Program Assessment Guide that details the Indicators were developed under the auspices of Kentucky's Department for Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL), Cabinet for Workforce Development.

MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

These Indicators were designed to reflect student outcomes in the belief that the truest measurement of a program's quality is its impact on the participants. Family Literacy Quality Indicators was designed to be used as a program assessment tool in tandem with Kentucky's Adult Education Indicators of Program Quality and age-appropriate assessment tools for children. A three-point scale is used to measure the various components. Standards for which indicators were developed include:

1. Programs will enhance the lifeskills of adults;
2. Programs will raise the educational level of adults;
3. Programs will raise adults' understanding of their power to affect their child's ability to learn;
4. Programs will enhance the relationship of the adult and child through planned, structured interaction;
5. Programs will increase the developmental skills of children;
6. Programs will enable adults to model a positive attitude toward educational opportunities;
7. Programs will prepare families to become involved in their communities;
8. Programs will integrate program components through joint planning and collaboration.

Performance Standards were established for each indicator and Sample Measures that demonstate adherence to each of the indicators were delineated.

BEST PRACTICES

Included with the Quality Indicators is a valuable matrix that details basic goals for beginning, progressing, and maturing Family Literacy programs. Areas covered include recruitment and retention, roles/characteristics of staff, and characteristics of students. Developed for programs with young children, many of the principles also work with older children.

The booklet also provides an annotated bibliography of Early Childhood Assessment tools and a description of Family Literacy Best Practices.

★★★ Focus on the Nation ★★★

The Focus Professional Development Project is funded not only to review and feature Pennsylvania's outstanding 353 projects in *Focus* Bulletins but to highlight exemplary special projects from other states as well. Areas pertinent to adult education practitioners featured in 1998 *Focus* bulletins are: Family Literacy, Special Populations, Life Skills, Program Improvement, and Staff Development.

This year, 20 projects were selected as exemplary based on a five-point scale for Innovation, Effectiveness, Adaptability, and quality of Final Report. The criteria used to determine these ratings are listed on page 1 of this Bulletin. The highest rating attainable is 5—Excellent, followed by 4—Superior and 3—Good. Six additional projects with outstanding components or products but less than superior scores in any one caterory were accorded an Honorable Mention.

PARENTING SKILLS THROUGH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS

Project #98-7020 Date: 1997
Agency: Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh, 2600 Carson St., Pittsburgh, PA 15203
Contact: Judith Aaronson Phone: 412-481-9005

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This project adapted the exemplary project, "Parenting Skills through Children's Literature" (Focus, January 1996) for use at family support centers. Participants were exposed to traditional parenting skills through the process of reading and critically examining issues raised in children's literature.

While recruitment efforts failed at the first two sites selected, project efforts were met with enthusiasm by a third Support Center director and staff. In all, some 13 women met for 16 weeks on a voluntary basis with good attendance despite training and work-related appointments mandated by recent welfare reform legislation.

The Final Report includes a 25-page Curriculum Guide that addresses the following issues: time management; families reading together; safety; coping with death, divorce, and loss; bedtime issues and fears; positive discipline; self-esteem; stress management; and children's development.

PROJECT RESULTS

The course was deemed effective based upon participants written comments and interviews with staff. Furthermore, one of the participants who demonstrated outstanding leadership abilities and an impressive knowledge of parenting information was chosen to be trained as the next facilitator of the program.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated **Excellent** for Adaptability and **Superior** for Innovation, Effectiveness and Final Report. This minigrant is great for smaller programs involved in family-centered learning. It has excellent suggestions for facilitators, a good curriculum, and is easily adaptable.

Oregon Project of Special Note

IDEAS THAT WORK FOR ABE/GED FAMILY LITERACY

Date: 1995
Agency: Salem Even Start Family Literacy Program, 4071 Winema Place NE, Chemeketa Community College Bldg. 52, Salem, OR 97309
Contact: Virginia Tardaewether
Phone: 503-399-4678

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

This Guide provides 184 pages of practical materials and strategies that can be used as a starting point for Family Literacy classes. It was designed by three practitioner/mentors/trainers with extensive training in all aspects of family literacy and an understanding of the various implementation models.

Geared to active parent involvement in all phases of the program, the Guide includes a locator instrument that allows parents to select the topics to be covered, detailed information on maintaining student portfolios, and samples of participatory assessment and evaluation tools.

An introductory page for each of the 14 units states the topic, lists relevant CASAS competencies, identifies materials needed, suggests optimal class size, and describes the activity.

COMPONENTS OF THE GUIDE

The "Family Portfolios" assessment which introduces the book provides strategies for parents to collect materials regarding adult progress, family issues, parent and child interactions, children's growth, development, and progress in school. These portfolios are viewed as a developmental process for both staff and parents. The guide sets forth a variety of ways in which they can be implemented.

"Parent Support Time" is appropriate for groups that want or need to work on self-esteem, goal-setting, motivation, or career development. There is also a section on "Self-Esteem" that complements this unit.

"Discipline" not only covers methods of guiding children but also addresses the weightier issues of fears, abuse, battering, and violence. Following "Family Literacy," there is a unit on parents and children working/playing together which suggests activities and practices suitable to children's age and development.

Two "Parents as First Teachers" units discuss everyday activities in the home that can become learning experiences for children. Activities to aid their development of reading and math skills are suggested and "The Trouble with Television" is explained.

"Health and Nutrition" discusses dental hygiene; how illness is spread through germs; alcohol, smoking, and drug abuse; and maintaining a healthy diet. "Family Rules that Work" provides an activity that demonstrates how people use Ground Rules.

Also included in this Guide for program use is a 30-page Family Literacy Program Handbook and suggestions for online communications projects.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Superior+ for Innovation, Adaptability, and Final Report. There was no documentation of its effectiveness.

Panel members noted that this is a very inclusive project. The detailed lesson plans for all topic areas are highly adaptable and provide an interesting connection to CASAS. Curriculum, lesson plans, and surveys could be used by tutors or teachers in any program that works with parents.

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HEALTH PROMOTION FOR ADULT LITERACY STUDENTS: CHILD SAFETY

Date: 1997
Agency: Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc., 102 Mosher Rd., Glenmont, NY 12077
Contact: Robin Granger Rischbieter
Phone: 518-432-4005

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

Child Safety is the latest in the exemplary series of Health Promotion modules produced by the Hudson River Center for Program Development and funded by the New York State Education Department. This module contains a student notebook, a teacher's guide, and an audio tape, which can be used for self-instruction.

Upon completion of the module, learners will:

1. Be able to identify and avert potential injury hazards in and outside the house.
2. Be alert to safety issues in the car, on the road, and in school or daycare situations.
3. Grasp the dangers of substance abuse, sexual abuse and HIV to children today.
4. Know the signs, symptoms, and forms of action for 10 common childhood diseases.
5. Identify first-aid procedures for possible injury and sources of assistance during emergencies.
6. Understand stages of child development from pregnancy through the adolescent years.

STUDENT WORKBOOK

The student workbook provides learners with vital safety information written in simple terms with copious illustrations and an accompanying tape. Included are checklists, worksheets, discussion questions and their answers, and a glossary.

The workbook also provides a checklist for childproofing the house and garage, a poison-proof checklist, and a list of fire safety rules for children. The appendices include a matrix of symptoms, incubation period, means of transmission, and duration of illness for common childhood diseases, while a chart details the recommended age for common vaccinations. Child safety resources and regional poison-control centers in New York state are also listed.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Guide provides an excellent bibliography, a list of emergency phone numbers and 800 numbers for child safety organizations and hotlines that are not limited to the state of New York.

Six Sample Lessons are structured to define goals, outcome objectives, instructional supplies needed, and activities. All include handouts that are in large type and are easily duplicated.

The bulk of the Guide is devoted to providing teachers with enough detailed information concerning child safety to make them feel at ease discussing these subjects with learners.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Adaptability and Final Report, Superior + for Innovation, and Superior for Effectiveness. There are great activity sheets and handouts which Focus panel members note could be used with all populations. The module can be used by tutors as well as teachers and is easily adaptable for any type of program that works with parents, including ESL.

STILL WINNERS

★ The March 1996 issue of Focus featured New York's "Health Promotion for Adult Literacy Students: An Empowering Approach." These multimedia health units developed by the Hudson River Center are designed to encourage learners to abandon risky health behaviors in favor of more positive ones.

The FOCUS panel consists of:
Bootsie Barbour, Northwest Professional Development Center, Erie; **Carol Goertzel,** Wawa, Inc., Philadelphia; **Joan Leopold,** Harrisburg State Hospital; Carol Molek, TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center, Lewistown; **Jeff Woodyard,** Tri-County OIC, Inc., Harrisburg; and **Rachel Zilcosky,** Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

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able
Special Project

FOCUS Bulletin

This Issue: PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

FEBRUARY 1998 VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2

Featured Projects: The Prescribing Desk Reference—p.1 • Using the Internet as an Instructional Tool—p.2 • Literacy Theater—p.2 • Technology–A Plan for the Future—p.3 • Creating a Technology Plan—p.3 • Building Communities for Learning—p.4 • Still Winners: Project Enactment—p.4

The special projects featured in FOCUS were funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education and rated according to the following criteria:

INNOVATION:
- Addresses major priorities.
- Creative use of resources.

EFFECTIVENESS:
- Objectives and outcomes are clearly stated.
- Materials are linked to results.
- Content is appropriate for the target audience.

ADAPTABILITY:
- Reports and/or curricula are clearly written.
- Little staff training is needed.

FINAL REPORT:
- Complete description of all products included.
- Readable, well-organized and well-presented.

ON A FIVE-POINT SCALE:
5 / Excellent • **4** / Superior • **3** / Good

PENNSYLVANIA PROJECTS MAY BE BORROWED FROM:

- AdvancE
  Pennsylvania Dept. of Education
  333 Market St. 11th Fl.
  Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
  Phone (from PA): (800) 992-2283
  Out of state: (717) 783-9192
  Fax: (717) 783-5420

- **When requesting a project,** please refer to its name and number.
- **Out-of-state projects** may be requested from the project director or State Literacy Resource Center as listed in the contact.

Sherry Royce
FOCUS Editor

Tana Reiff
FOCUS Format

Project of Special Note

Prescribing Desk Reference

Date: 1995
Agency: Dermott Special School District, PO Box 380, Dermott, AR 71638
Author: Dr. Delbert Farrar **Phone:** 870-538-5416

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The massive two-volume, 17-pound *Prescribing Desk Reference* was developed by special-needs personnel at state and local levels under the guidance of Dr. Delbert Farrar. It offers teachers a cross-walk between the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Form-5 Complete Battery and Contemporary Books, Steck-Vaughn Books, Pre-GED 2000 Software, the Arkansas PACE Competency Cabinets (2nd edition), the IMPAC Computer Program (1994 edition), and The Skills Bank 3 Computer program.

Using this comprehensive resource makes it easy for teachers to identify specific deficiencies identified by the TABE Complete Battery and write prescriptions for adult education students. A typical student prescription plan is enclosed. Administrators can use the guide to review materials for purchase and to determine appropriateness of instruction.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated **Superior+** for Adaptability and Innovation and Superior for Effectiveness. This should be available in every program's library. A sample page is reproduced below.

PRESCRIBING DESK REFERENCE

T.A.B.E. FULL BATTERY TEST: 1 FORM: 5 LEVEL: E PAGE 5
GRADE PLACEMENT: 2-4 CATEGORY: READING
SKILL: VOCABULARY OBJECTIVE: HOMONYMS
SUBSKILL:

SOURCE	TEST ITEMS	MODULE	NAME OF MATERIALS	MEDIUM
CONTEMPORARY BOOKS	16-21		Reader's Choice: Book 1, Insights pp. 6,14,22,30,38,46,62,70,78,86, 94	W
			Reader's Choice: Book 2, Connections - pp. 14,22,30,46	W
STECK-VAUGHN	16-21		Language Exercises for Adults: Level A - pp. 25-27	W
			Language Exercises for Adults: Level B - pp. 18,20,22,24,88	W
			Language Exercises for Adults: Level C - pp. 3,4,10,12,87	W
PACE Ar. CC. 2nd. ed.	16-21	IPI-489	RAYOP: Introduction to Homonyms	W
		R-111	Homonyms and General Content	W
IMPAC - R	16-21	LA 5.8.3	Homophones	CAI
		LA 5.8.4	Homographs	CAI
SKILLS BANK - 3			WORD KNOWLEDGE (RED DISK) (3.5" or 5.25")	
	16-21	1	Introduction to Words With Multiple Meanings - Disk 2 or 6	CAI
		2	Words with Multiple Meanings II - Disk 2 or 6	CAI
		3	Introduction to Homonyms - Disk 2 or 6	CAI
		4	Homonyms II - Disk 2 or 6	CAI

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New York Project of Special Note

USING THE INTERNET AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL

Date: 1997
Agency: Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc. 102 Mosher Rd., Glenmont, NY 12077
Contact: Barbara Smith **Phone:** 518-432-4005

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

This excellent guide to the integration of the Internet and instruction is typical of New York's high-quality special projects. Its initial 27 pages provide basic information on what the Internet is, how to connect to it, and how to use it. Following this explanation are 15 sample lessons, handouts to accompany the lessons, an appendix of resources, and a glossary of Internet terms.

CONTENTS OF MANUAL

The manual focuses on three areas essential to instructional application:

- communication,
- information access, and
- search tools.

Under Communication Tools, the manual discusses e-mail, listservs, and internet relay chats (IRC) and suggests instructional activities that can be used with each of these. The manual also describes Usenet newsgroups and provides examples of how they are classified hierarchically by subject matter.

There is a brief explanation of multi-user environments, which are being used by educators to create virtual campuses and communities, as well as Internet Telephony, whereby speech is digitized, enabling users to listen to live or recorded broadcasts over the Internet.

In discussing Access Tools, the manual explains how students can tap into research databases, go into libraries worldwide, and download software applications to expand the capabilities of their computers as well as peripheral equipment such as printers and scanners.

Topics covered include File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Gopher, and the World Wide Web. Suggested WWW activities include exploring URLs linked to magazines, television shows, and newspapers.

Popular search tools such as Gopher and Veronica are described, and URLs are given for various search engines, such as Yahoo and Alta Vista. Among the suggested activities for learners is a keyword search for information about their ancestry.

SAMPLE LESSONS

Each of the 15 sample lessons identifies a goal; lists outcome objectives, instructional materials, and resources; suggests a variety of activities; and, if needed, provides duplicatable handouts. Topics covered include: cultures around the world, planning a trip, resumes and cover letters, job search in cyberspace, getting help for learning disabilities, math mirth, and the latest information on AIDS and HIV.

INTERNET RESOURCES

A comprehensive listing of online resources is classified as follows: literacy organizations, literacy and ESOL instructional resources, technology and education resources, funding and grant information resources, employment training and workplace literacy, family literacy resources, technology planning resources, miscellaneous, multicultural education, and Internet search engines.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Innovation and Final Report and Superior for Effectiveness and Adaptability. Focus panel members praised it as straightforward, easy to read and understand, and much better than similar products reviewed to date. Unfortunately, it will quickly become dated.

LITERACY THEATER

HONORABLE MENTION

Date: 1997
Agency: New Hampshire Department of Education, 101 Pleasant St., Concord, NH 03301
Contact: Dorothy Oliver **Phone:** 603-271-6698

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Literacy theater has been practiced by adult educators in the United States and Canada since 1985. This booklet by Dorothy Oliver on history, process, and funding describes literacy theater as the act of presenting a short, worst-case scenario, followed by the actors staying in character to dialogue with audience members about the issues described.

The concept, having originated in Friere's Popular Theater as a vehicle to influence social change, was first taken up in the United States to help resolve teen problems. Literacy theater was adapted in 1984 by adult educators in the Northern New England States as a vehicle for teacher training. In 1994, funding from the National Literacy Institute enabled the Northern New England Social Action Theater to perform in 46 states and provided extensive training sessions in 28 states.

Pennsylvania's own Susquehanna County Volunteer Literacy Council was among the early literacy theater groups formed. Its *Project Enactment*, which used literacy theater as a recruitment and community awareness tool, was rated Excellent across the board and featured in the February 1991 Focus. (See page 4, *Still Winners*, for more details.)

PROJECT RATIONALE

This 66-page booklet provides readers with a rationale based on solid research that advances literacy theater as a tremendously effective tool for staff training. It is geared to accommodate the frequent training and retraining necessitated by the high turnover of adult education teachers due to the part-time nature of the field and the singular lack of benefits and job security.

Wonderful for kinesthetic learners, it provides an alternative model that encourages learning through nonlinear, holistic, and intuitive strategies. It meets the guide-

lines established by the National ABE Staff Development Consortium for effective ABE staff development.

Furthermore, its structure provides a framework onto which staff issues of concern to teachers, administrators, and volunteers may be overlaid. As Oliver suggests, "Participants identify their needs and concerns, base scenarios on them, and dialogue with the characters and audience defining options, roles, and responsibilities."

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The meat of the booklet is contained in the chapters on Facilitation, Actors, Scenarios, Performing, and Training. Every step along the way is outlined and commented on by Oliver, who is a delight to read and obviously has been part of the process for a long time.

The facilitator is the catalyst in the process, introducing the scenarios to the audience and, by asking questions, modeling how the audience and actors should interact. The Actors' mission is to establish their relationship with each other, play out the scenario, and then stay in character in order to respond to the audience. At its best, literacy theater becomes interactive theater where critical thinking and collaborative problem solving take place.

Creating a good scenario is the most important and difficult job. Fifteen different scenarios are presented throughout the booklet, including scenarios for ESL students, teenagers, inmates, nonreaders, and adults with special needs.

This booklet is dedicated to the memory of Marti Stevens who, as director and facilitator, established the principles of literacy theater for the Northern New England group. Tapes of Marti's facilitating techniques can be borrowed through the New Hampshire Office of Adult Education.

At a time when adult educators are so actively engaged in the hard data of quality initiatives, this project suggests the value to be gained from an experience that "helped staff monitor their own behavior, be more sensitive to student needs, and be more aware of issues that impact on student behavior."

TECHNOLOGY: A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Project #98-6017 **Date:** 1996
Agency: Tri-County OIC, Inc., 2107 North 6th St., Harrisburg, PA 17110
Contact: Jeffrey Woodyard **Phone:** 717-238-7318

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This minigrant developed a written plan to institutionalize the use of technology at the Tri-County Opportunities Industrialization Center which serves 900 adult students yearly at their Harrisburg center and at 10 satellites. While the target audience for the project were OIC instructional, counseling, support and administrative staff, implementation of the plan will benefit OIC students by providing greater access to information, variety in instructional delivery, and better data for developing individual educational plans.

PROCESS AND RESULTS

The plan addressed the use of technology in the following program areas: outreach and recruitment; intake and assessment; instructional delivery; information retrieval; administrative management; counseling; and follow-up. Project staff first gathered information about existing knowledge and practice from the National Center for Literacy and supplemented it with site visits to local providers.

The development of a mission statement focusing the goals of the project was followed by an analysis of how technology was currently being used by OIC staff and site sponsors. Impact data as to the cost of technology versus its benefits, current course offerings versus future needs, and the marketability of technology to learners and staff was collected. An inventory list of current available technology was prepared and served as the foundation for making recommendations for future acquisitions.

The resulting plan has been used to justify many program changes which have been readily accepted because of the participatory nature of the planning process.

CREATING A TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Project #99-6010 **Date:** 1996
Agency: Northampton Community College, 3835 Green Pond Rd., Bethlehem, PA 18017
Contact: Dr. Manuel Gonzalez **Phone:** 610-861-5427

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

Maureen Cort and Nancy Disario, project staff with expertise in the effective use of technology in a literacy program, developed a seven-step planning guide and workbook to assist adult literacy providers in establishing and implementing a systematic technology plan within their organizations.

The first step, entitled *Vision*, is designed to help administrators focus on the current use of technology. Worksheets with salient questions are provided to encourage them to envision potential benefits and advantages. An *Environmental Scan* which

Continued on p.4

***** Focus on the Nation *****

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TECHNOLOGY PLAN, from p.3

reviews the organization's strengths, weaknesses, and available resources is the next step.

Software and Hardware Evaluation worksheets are provided to help administrators and teachers make informed and wise selections in keeping with the next step, *Developing a Budget*. Basic guidelines for building *Effective Technology Staff Development* are discussed, followed by suggestions for *Implementation* and *Evaluation*. A series of appendices lists various technologies and their applications, compares integrated learning systems and curriculum systems, and provides a sample technology plan.

BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING

Project #98-7007 **Date**: 1997
Agency: Center for Literacy, Inc., 636 S. 48th St., Philadelphia, PA 19143
Contact: Dr. Sheila Sherow **Phone:** 215-474-1235

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

In 1994, the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) coordinated a task force to explore and plan the implementation of a statewide project to initiate and guide local stakeholders in the establishment of community-based planning groups. Three pilot sites in rural southwest and central northeast Pennsylvania were funded in 1995 and are still operational. In 1996-97, they assumed the role of Mentoring Communities, providing training and technical assistance to four new localities.

Those served and involved in the Building Community Linkage (BCL) project are not limited to ABLE providers and consumers. They include: preschool, K-12, and post-secondary education providers; job training programs, job centers and other job placement services; public assistance and other human-resource agencies; community economic development agencies and other planning groups; local government agencies; business and industry, business associations, and chambers of commerce.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

In addition to the Final Report detailing the project's goals, objectives, procedures, results, and recommendations, two guidebooks were produced: *Guidebook for Community-Based Planning* (1995-96) and *Guidelines for Mentoring Communities* (1997). The 1996 *Guidebook* describes the process whereby a strategic plan is developed to prepare for the changing characteristics, issues, and conditions that will affect the delivery of high-quality, comprehensive adult education services both now and in the future. It includes advice on establishing the group, developing a common understanding and group mission, setting goals, and sharing leadership.

The Mentoring Guidelines component describes the characteristics of BCL mentors and the variety of roles they perform. It includes advice on building a mentoring relationship and discusses effective communication, critical thinking, problem solving, brainstorming, conflict resolution, negotiation, and reaching consensus.

Project Enactment ...
Produced by: Susquehanna County Volunteer Literacy Council (1990)

Enactment was rated an exemplary project and featured in the February 1991 issue of Focus. The project developed an improvisational theater group that presented skits dramatizing the problems faced by adult illiterates. This Final Report includes the eight skits developed and describes the process by which 29 performances were given to 3,400 people in a small Pennsylvania community.
Contact: AdvancE at 717-783-9192 for further information on this project.

The FOCUS panel consists of:
Bootsie Barbour, Northwest Professional Development Center, Erie; **Carol Goertzel,** WAWA, Inc., Philadelphia; **Joan Leopold,** Harrisburg State Hospital; Carol Molek, TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center, Lewistown; **Jeff Woodyard,** Tri-County OIC, Inc., Harrisburg; and **Rachel Zilcosky,** Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

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PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Special Project

This Issue:
STAFF DEVELOPMENT

FOCUS on Math

MARCH 1998 VOLUME 12, NUMBER 3

Featured Projects: Tutor Trainer's Manual—p.1 • Tips and Techniques and the NOW Notebook—p.2 • EQuIP: Educational Quality Indicator Program—p.3 • Creating a Technology Plan—p.3 • ABLE Summer Institute: Research and Practice—p.3 • Adult Basic Skills Guide and Training Manual—p.4 • Adult Basic Skills Staff Development Project Video Series—p.4

The special projects featured in FOCUS were funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education and rated according to the following criteria:

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- Content is appropriate for the target audience.

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- Little staff training is needed.

FINAL REPORT:
- Complete description of all products included.
- Readable, well-organized and well-presented.

ON A FIVE-POINT SCALE:
5 / Excellent • **4** / Superior • **3** / Good

PENNSYLVANIA PROJECTS MAY BE BORROWED FROM:
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  Pennsylvania Dept. of Education
  333 Market St. 11th Fl.
  Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
  Phone (from PA): (800) 992-2283
  Out of state: (717) 783-9192
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- **When requesting a project**, please refer to its name and number.
- **Out-of-state projects** may be requested from the project director or State Literacy Resource Center as listed in the contact.

Sherry Royce
Focus Editor

Tana Reiff
Focus Format

Project of Special Note

Tutor Trainer's Manual

Date: 1993
Developed by: Portland Community College
Authors: Geraldine Pearson, Virginia Patton, Carolyn Homan
Contact: Agnes Precure, Office of Community College Services, 255 Capitol St. NE, Salem, OR 97310-1341
Phone: 503-378-8648

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

In 1990, The Training Effective Literacy Tutors (TELT) advisory group began the development of a tutor trainer's guide and modules. In 1993, these were revised and combined. The resulting *TELT Trainer's Manual* stated in its preface: "This is a living document and will never be completed ..." The same is true for many of the staff development guides featured in this issue of Focus.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

This comprehensive guide is organized around a ten-hour TELT workshop that includes complementary strands for Basic Literacy and English as a Second Language tutor training. The Initial Sessions devoted to the Adult Learner, Cultural Differences, Learning Styles/Teaching Styles, Assessment, and Goal Setting, along with the Final Session keyed to the workshop evaluation and local agency concerns, can be presented to the group as a whole. Mastering the Subject Matter, the heart of the workshop, details different approaches for ESL and literacy tutors.

Each of the Sessions detailed in the Manual is preceded by a statement of Training Objectives (listing instructional goals and participant performance objectives), Training Content (specifying knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed), Lesson Plans, and a description of the corresponding Module. One reason this product is such a valuable resource is that a variety of lesson plans are offered, and it is possible for programs or trainers to "make it their own."

CONTENTS OF MODULES

Each Module in a Session includes a Trainer's Guide listing materials needed, a choice of activities, follow-up, and a personal reflection exercise. The overheads and handouts included are drawn from commercial and nonprofit sources and include such old favorites as "A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers" (NAPCAE, 1966).

While the choice of activities is flexible the discussion questions are highly controlled. Tutor trainers are told exactly what to *say:* "When I say the work culture, what do you think of?" and *do:* "As tutors give responses, write them on Overhead 2.1. Put all responses that deal with superficial culture (food, art, music, etc.) at the top of the tree."

The introductory session on The Adult Learner compares characteristics of adult learners with children. It provides general instructions for tutors working with adults and uses the case method to recap learning.

In Cultural Differences, participants examine American cultural values and beliefs. They then discuss the effects of culture shock, learn the signs of nonverbal behavior, and review their

Continued on p.2

Tutor Trainer's Manual, from p.1

learning by interpreting common tutoring situations through the student's culture and through their own.

Learning Styles provides observations of the behavior of auditory, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic learners. It suggests teaching methods and adjustments to enhance instruction for different audiences. There is a learning-styles checklist for students and one for tutors as well. Also included is a short discourse on learning disabilities, its symptoms and manifestations, and suggested strategies for working with adults with known or possible learning disabilities.

The brief student survey of interests and needs contained in Assessment and Goal Setting has a reading level which clearly explains why ESL tutors are excused from attending this session.

MASTERING THE BASICS

The TELT Manual offers tutor trainers their choice of a basal series, provided they use the *Laubach Way to Reading, Challenger Books, Reading for Today, Real Life English,* or the *Breakthrough to Math Series.* Basic literacy trainers receive specific training in decoding, comprehension, language experience, spelling, and writing.

The Basic Lesson Planning module offers tips and techniques for reading, word recognition, and writing. Five case histories adapted from LVA's *Tutor* provide practice in developing lesson plans using reading experience, Cloze procedures, SQ3R, and journal writing.

The ESL trainers' session begins with an explanation of the purpose of language, language systems, principles of second language acquisition, and implications for teaching. Additional modules provide instruction in vocabulary development, conversation skills, pronunciation, and language-experience stories.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Effectiveness, Adaptability, and Final Report and Superior for Innovation. While panelists complained about the amount of references with no bibliography, they readily praised its useful worksheets and handouts. A good reference for new teachers, it is clearly written and easily administered.

Kentucky Project of Special Note

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES AND THE NOW HANDBOOK

Date: 1997
Agency: The Kentucky Department of Adult Education and Literacy, Cabinet of Workforce Development, 500 Mero St., Capitol Plaza FL 3, Frankfort, KY 40601-4337
Contact: Dr. Sandra Kestner
Phone: 502-564-5114

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

Tips and Techniques serves as a digest of current adult education theory and exemplary practice for adult education practitioners as well as a core manual for Kentucky's *Orientation to Adult Education I, II, and III* training. The *NOW Handbook,* which stands for Newcomer's Organizational Welcome, provides new adult education program managers with a compilation of Kentucky's Department of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) organization, policies, materials, and documents.

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

The Handbook is divided into 13 units with an overview detailing expected participant outcomes as a result of completing the training. Areas covered include: introduction to Kentucky DAEL's structure, goals, and mission; understanding adult learner characteristics and key principles of adult learning; recruitment strategies; student orientation and assessment; matching the adult learner with appropriate instructor/tutor, class, materials, and instructional plan; instructional techniques; learning disabilities; qualities of an effective instructor; professional development; policies, methods, and requirements; student support and retention; and council development and collaborative partnerships.

Each unit begins with an introduction providing background and the philosophy undergirding the unit, followed by a statement of key objectives, enabling objectives, learning activities, and evaluation.

THE NOW HANDBOOK

The NOW Handbook begins with an orientation checklist of specific topics of importance to new program directors that are addressed in the Handbook. It details additional areas of importance for new managers and suggest resources for acquiring familiarity with them. The looseleaf booklet covers departmental information, contracts and budgets, the mentor process, DAEL policies, standard forms and invoicing, councils, GED Testing Information, the Kentucky Center for AEL, a directory of DAEL programs, program performance indicators, and standards for adult education instructors.

THE MENTOR PROCESS

While all this material is pertinent only to Kentucky, the format and structure of the Handbook is a model that would be applicable in most states. But the real reason to review this product is the Mentor Process established to assure that a new program manager has support from an experienced adult education program manager for a period of 90 days. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the mentor to review the orientation checklist with the new manager and attest to completion of each topic.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Innovation and Effectiveness and Superior for Adaptability and Final Report. Focus panel members stated, "These manuals provide excellent on-the-job training with different sections for managers and teachers, good examples of boilerplate policies, useful handouts in a looseleaf format that is easy to duplicate and replace, and good integration of workforce and ABE. This is an effective, well-organized approach with the bonus of promoting mentoring relationships."

EQUIP: EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INDICATOR PROGRAM

Date: 1997

Developed by: The Western Panhandle Coalition for the Florida Bureau of Adult and Community Education. Linda Weeks, principal researcher

Contact: Joe Waters, FAU College of Education, ACENET, P.O. Box 309, Boca Raton, 33431-0991

Phone: 561-297-2346

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The EQuIP Manual is a self-paced, individualized training program that provides guidance to practitioners in evaluating the quality of their adult education programs. It includes a manual, resource guide, tutorials, teacher/administrator evaluation and needs assessment checklists, and a bibliography classified by topic areas.

The nine indicators of program quality addressed in the Manual are: educational gains, educational outcomes, retention, recruitment, program orientation, program planning and evaluation, curriculum and instruction, support services, and staff development.

Each focus area contains an overview of the topic, the descriptors which provide measurement standards for each indicator, instructional modules that teach the utilization of each descriptor, and a listing of resources available in the Resource Guide.

A SAMPLE MODULE

For example, the quality indicator for program planning and evaluation has six descriptors: types and scope of program plans; community input in program planning; program evaluation activities; procedures for student tracking and follow-up, and student involvement in program planning and evaluation. The module on Student Follow-up answers the questions: Why do we need follow-up? What tools may be used? and How do we use attitudinal surveys, interviews, home visits, and job-site visits?

It lists the facts to be collected in entry interviews, exit interviews, and follow-up interviews and suggests methods for analyzing and reporting the results.

THE RESOURCE GUIDE

The Resource Guide provides in detail the information needed to supplement the EQuIP training Manual. The scope is enormous and covers such items as a descriptions of standard testing instruments, a discussion of student portfolios and learning contracts, tutorials on peer learning groups and user-friendly evaluations, marketing tips, mentoring, and norms of professional virtue.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Innovation and Final Report and Superior for Effectiveness and Adaptability. The Focus panel noted that it was well organized, easy to read, easily adaptable, and a good resource for planning. It provides a good structure for going through a process without being process-driven.

ABLE SUMMER INSTITUTE: RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Project #99-6004 **Date:** 1996

Agency: PSU Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, 102 Rackley Building, State College, PA 16802-3202

Contact: Priscilla Carman **Phone:** 814-863-3777

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

In the summer of 1995, the Institute for Adult Literacy at Penn State University conducted a two-day institute that explored the complex factors affecting how adults learners develop and use reading and writing skills throughout their lives. What makes this institute worthy of review is: 1) its focus on current research and exemplary practice and 2) the resources in its final report and participant resource manual.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

In addition to a description of needs, objectives, planning, recruitment, and evaluation, the final report includes samples of registration, evaluation, and promotional materials. There is also a brief biography of presenters, a list of participants, and a detailed description of the 18 general sessions.

These sessions were organized around the topic areas of literacy acquisition in relation to younger adults, gender, older adults, the community, and the workplace. Under each topic area in *The Participant's Resource Guide* there is a summary of each presentation and a wealth of resources. These resources include activities for adult learners, information for staff development, and bibliographies and references for research purposes. A listing of programs and activities from AARP, an article on "Women, Human Development, and Learning," and the four principles of TQM (total quality management) are just a sampling of the materials included in the Guide.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Innovation and Final Report and Superior for Effectiveness and Adaptation. The articles are excellent and can be utilized by trainers and administrators in ABLE programs throughout the state to facilitate issue-based discussions.

★★★ Focus on the Nation ★★★

The Focus Professional Development Project is funded not only to review and feature Pennsylvania's outstanding 353 projects in Focus Bulletins but to highlight exemplary special projects from other states as well. Areas pertinent to adult education practitioners featured in 1998 Focus Bulletins are: Family Literacy, Special Populations, Life Skills, Program Improvement, and Staff Development.

This year, 20 projects were selected as exemplary based on a five-point scale for Innovation, Effectiveness, Adaptability, and quality of Final Report. The criteria used to determine these ratings are listed on page 1 of this Bulletin. The highest rating attainable is 5—Excellent, followed by 4—Superior and 3—Good. Six additional projects with outstanding components or products but less than superior scores in any one category were accorded an Honorable Mention.

ADULT BASIC SKILLS GUIDE AND TRAINING MANUAL

Date: 1992
Agency: Appalachian State University and North Carolina Dept. of Community Colleges, 200 West Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27603
Contact: Randy Whitfield **Phone:** 919-733 7051

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Adult Basic Skills Instructor Training (ABSIT) project was designed to develop a cadre of adult basic skills instructor trainers familiar with four basic areas of instruction: 1) establishing and sustaining interpersonal communication with adult learners, 2) effectively assessing and diagnosing learners' strengths and weaknesses, 3) selecting appropriate methodologies and materials for individual learners and groups of learners, and 4) participating in meaningful program evaluation. Seventy-one instructor competencies were developed in these four areas and used as the basis for training workshops and summer institutes.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The lessons in the ABSIT Manual are clustered in seven units: Interpersonal Communications; Assessment; Methods in Reading; Methods in Language Arts; Numeracy; General Methods and Instructional Management; and Materials. While experienced instructors can use it independently to evaluate their competencies in each area, a prescribed training sequence is included for Pre-Service Training, Basic Training, and Intermediate Level Training. Lesson plans for each session include objectives, time frame, activities, and resources.

FOCUS RATING

The project was rated Superior for Effectiveness, Adaptability, and Final Report and Good for Innovation. Although it lacks depth, this logical, sequential presentation of adult basic skills is useful for group training or individual self-improvement.

ADULT BASIC SKILLS STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT VIDEO SERIES

Date: 1997
Agency: ABSSD Project, Appalachian State University, Language, Reading and Exceptionalities, Edwin Duncan Hall, Boone, NC 28608
Contact: Dr. Cheryl Knight **Phone:** 704-262-2598

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The *Adult Basic Skills Staff Development Project (ABSSD) Video Series* was produced to complement the *Adult Basic Skills Guide and Training Manual*. It includes 25 videos varying in length from eight minutes to one hour and 40 minutes. There is an annotated bibliography, previewing the contents of each video, a series of viewing guides keyed to each video, and two case studies. In some instances, the guides refer to the ABSIT Manual for additional information on the subject covered. Videos include:

- Assessment
- Conversation with Beginning Readers
- Cooperative Learning
- ESL for Adult Learners
- Good Management: Key to Successful Learning
- Informal Reading Inventory
- Initial Interview
- Instructors as Listeners Videoconference
- Learning Styles
- Mentoring as Professional Development
- Methods in Reading
- Motivation for the Adult Learner
- Needs and Characteristics of the Adult Learner
- Numeracy for the Adult Learner
- Overview of Materials Selection
- Presenting the ABSSD Project
- Qualities of an Effective ABS Instructor
- Questioning Techniques
- Reading Case Study I and II

The Focus Panel praised the video series with its accompanying worksheets and annotated bibliography as a useful, supplemental staff development tool.

The FOCUS panel consists of:
Bootsie Barbour, Northwest Professional Development Center, Erie; **Carol Goertzel,** Wawa, Inc., Philadelphia; **Joan Leopold,** Harrisburg State Hospital; Carol Molek, TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center, Lewistown; **Jeff Woodyard,** Tri-County OIC, Inc., Harrisburg; and **Rachel Zilcosky,** Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

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PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Special Project

FOCUS on Adult Basic Education

This Issue: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

APRIL 1998 VOLUME 12, NUMBER 4

Featured Projects: IU 5: School to Work —p.1 • Extending the Ladder from CASAS to Work Keys Assessment —2 • Work Beyond the GED —p.3 • Still Winners: Adult Education School to Work Project —p.3 • From Incarceration to Productive Lifestyle —p.4

The special projects featured in FOCUS were funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education and rated according to the following criteria:

INNOVATION:
- Addresses major priorities.
- Creative use of resources.

EFFECTIVENESS:
- Objectives and outcomes are clearly stated.
- Materials are linked to results.
- Content is appropriate for the target audience.

ADAPTABILITY:
- Reports and/or curricula are clearly written.
- Little staff training is needed.

FINAL REPORT:
- Complete description of all products included.
- Readable, well-organized and well-presented.

ON A FIVE-POINT SCALE:
5 / Excellent • **4** / Superior • **3** / Good

PENNSYLVANIA PROJECTS MAY BE BORROWED FROM:
- AdvancE
  Pennsylvania Dept. of Education
  333 Market St. 11th Fl.
  Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
  Phone (from PA): (800) 992-2283
  Out of state: (717) 783-9192
  Fax: (717) 783-5420

- **When requesting a project,** please refer to its name and number.
- **Out-of-state projects** may be requested from the project director or State Literacy Resource Center as listed in the contact.

Sherry Royce
Focus Editor

Tana Reiff
Focus Format

Project of Special Note

IU 5: School to Work

Project #98-7005 **Date:** 1997
Developed by: Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5, 670 W. 36 St., Erie, PA 16508-2645
Contact: Dr. Richard Gacka
Phone: 814-734-5610

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Over a three-year period, The Regional Skill Center (RSC), an adult technical school serving Erie County, found that the academic skills of 70% of the adults applying for admission for technical training were not sufficient for success in formal post-secondary training. However, applicants referred to ABE programs for academic studies failed to enroll. Furthermore, many adults with adequate academic skills were sorely lacking in "work readiness" skills, such as response to supervision, appearance and grooming, and quality consciousness.

To solve this problem, this project, a continuation of the exemplary ***Adult Education School-To-Work Project*** featured in the April 1997 issue of Focus (see page 3 of this issue), developed four 60-hour workforce preparation curriculum modules, modified the teaching sequence in vocational classes at the RSC, and provided assessment, the development of academic profiles, and direct instructional services.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Enrollment in an academic work-readiness program was made a prerequisite for admission to RSC and/or completing an employability module became a prerequisite to accepting an application for employment. An ABLE-funded mathematics program using units from the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) applied math curriculum was established at the RSC. The RSC also initiated and funded an Agency for Instructional Technology (AIT) communications program.

Individuals showing severe academic deficiencies or those who required more than the 20 three-hour classes provided were referred to more traditional service models.

Classes were also held in conjunction with the Corry Higher Education Council and at a Job Center site. In all, some 50 adults received instruction throughout the project year.

EMPLOYABILITY CURRICULUM

Curriculum and guidance activities delivered as part of the project were integrated with IU 5's ongoing School-to-Work activities. Local employers reviewed curriculum drafts and provided information relative to employer expectations for "new hires." Twenty of these expectations are listed in Appendix B.

A series of four adult education workplace "modules" were developed, field tested, and offered as courses. A competency-based Student Checklist was developed for each course and provided learners with immediate feedback on skills, attitudes, and behavior.

The Work Hardening Course

"Work Hardening," a pre-employability course, is designed for participants with no work history or a history of frequent turnover or involuntary terminations. Each participant is provided with a checklist of competencies they are

Continued on p.2

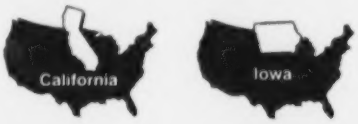
California and Iowa Project of Special Note

EXTENDING THE LADDER FROM CASAS TO WORK KEYS ASSESSMENTS

Date: 1997

Agencies: **ACT:** 2201 North Dodge St., PO Box 168, Iowa City, IA 52243. **Contact:** Dr. Joyce R. McLarty. **Phone:** 800-workeys and **CASAS**, 8910 Clairmont Mesa Blvd., San Diego, CA 92123. **Contact:** Patricia Rickard. **Phone:** 619-292-2900.

For copies of the Executive Summary or Full Report, contact CASAS Customer Service, at the above address.



DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This landmark study, funded in part by the National Institute for Literacy, was undertaken by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) in conjunction with the ACT Center for Education and Work. Staff from both organizations studied the relationship between their two assessment systems and determined how the systems could best be linked to support individuals as they move up the employability skills ladder.

The study first reviewed the correspondence and difference between the content of the two systems. They concluded that the reading and mathematics assessments in CASAS's Employability Competency System (ECS) and ACT's Work Keys contained enough overlap in content to form a link and enough difference in the range of difficulty to make linking worthwhile. This conclusion was proven valid by testing 494 adult learners participating in 27 workforce literacy programs in eight states.

The 20-page Executive Summary offers an overview of the project, a description of the research plan and methodology, and an interpretation of the results, conclusions, and recommendations for potential users.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Summary provides readers with two tables for the reading assessments denoting how ACT Work Keys scores correspond to CASAS ECS levels, and visa versa. There are two similar tables for the mathematics assessments. While the relationship between score scales for each skill is sufficient for scores on one test to be estimated from scores on the other, the study is careful to point out that "scores on one test may not be directly substituted for scores on the other for the same skill area."

These complementary systems can be used together to provide a smooth, progressing, and complete skills continuum. The Workforce Learning System is best used to cover skills that are more basic and provides more information on the skills of individuals functioning at the lower end of the skills continuum. The Work Keys system covers advanced skills and provides more information on the skills of individuals functioning at the higher end of the skills continuum. Either or both assessment systems can be used with individuals whose skills are in the mid-range of the skills curriculum.

Recommendations for usage include: 1) Individuals in CASAS-based programs can use Work Keys Occupational Profiles along with the tables provided by this study to estimate the CASAS scores they would need to meet the reading and mathematics requirements for specific occupations; 2) Individuals who need to meet a Work Keys standard for a new job or promotion can estimate how they would perform on a Work Keys assessment based on Workforce Learning Systems tests they have already taken.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Innovation, Effectiveness, and Final Report and Superior+ for Adaptation. It provides a good background for using a competency-based curriculum.

School to Work, from p.1

expected to demonstrate by the close of the program. The emphasis in the program is to expose the learner to basic behavioral and attitudinal expectations they will face in the work place and monitor their ability to learn and demonstrate the "work ethic" and "self-regulatory" skills that will be needed to gain and sustain employment.

Employability Levels 1-3

Employability Levels 1-3 represent a continuum of work preparation skills addressed to an audience ranging from adults who are currently unemployed or seeking better-paying jobs to individuals who are currently employed but are attempting to move to better jobs. Levels 1 and 2 emphasize the refinement of positive "work ethic" skills; include reviews of reading, mathematical, and communication skills as they relate to work; and provide career exploration exercises and resume and skills portfolio development. Level 3 focuses on skills prerequisite for post-secondary training while monitoring students' motivation, attendance, work habits, and general interpersonal skills.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cogent comments on School-To-Work programs presented in the Final Report would be of value to any agency considering mounting a School-To-Work program, namely:

- There is a large population of adults with academic barriers to employability previously untapped as ABLE clients.
- The term "workforce preparation" should be used to accurately describe ABE services to individuals who need academic instruction in order to meet minimum competencies for employability.
- Two factors that are critical to the success of an employability program are the level of commitment of the director of the host agency and the match between student and staff personality characteristics.
- Employers responded positively to a competency-based program targeted to their specific needs.

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- The development and testing of modules in employability classes can lead to a data bank of lessons from which employers can select in order to customize a program to their needs.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated **Excellent** for Innovation, Effectiveness, Final Report and **Superior+** for Adaptability. Panel staff praised the project's list of competencies covering four levels of learners. It exemplified collaboration between adult education and the private sector with lots of data to back up the process. However, it should be noted that this project was developed over time and needs experienced trainers and a committed staff.

WORK BEYOND THE GED

Project #98-7011 **Date:** 1997
Agency: Intermediate Unit 1, One Intermediate Unit Dr., Coal Center, PA 15423-9642
Contact: Sue Conrady **Phone:** 412-938-3241

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This project developed and applied School-To-Work core elements within a GED program. Adults who focused on self-awareness, career awareness, career counseling, job shadowing, and job-site mentoring activities as part of their GED training viewed passing the GED as the first step toward full employment and self-fulfillment.

Of the 43 adult learners entering the program, 27 students developed career portfolios and five received job-site shadowing and mentoring experiences. Ten students obtained jobs and eight students entered other training programs.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

Products developed include a Curriculum Resource List, a Student Activity Log, and a Sample Student Portfolio. The Resource List provides a summary of 27 references ranging from career planning and decision making to job search and essential skills for the workplace. The title, author, publisher, a synopsis, and recommendations for usage are included for each resource.

The Student Activity Log provides brief sketches of 35 activities described in terms of objectives or student competencies to be acquired and demonstrated. Each objective is followed by a synopsis of the components of the activity and recommendation for use by tutor, teacher, or counselor.

The Sample Student Portfolio is a working document that provides the reader with a real feeling for all elements of the course. It begins with a list of the books that were annotated in the Resource List and a Checklist of the activities described in the Student Activity Log. This is followed by a listing of suggested competencies classified as Daily Living Skills, Personal-Social Skills, and Occupational Guidance and Preparation.

There is a list of program presenters accompanied by a speaker evaluation form, an Interest and Abilities Log, and worksheets on Temperaments, Values, and Functional Skills.

The information on Resumes and Interviews is fairly standard. However, the description of a Shadow Experience and the Guidelines for a Shadowing Program would be of value to any GED program opting to expand into the workforce preparation area.

PROJECT CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Project staff noted that the activity of job shadowing and mentoring was a new experience for them. "Building an information base for businesses and then communicating this information to the businesses was a more involved process than initially anticipated" and difficult for staff to accomplish. Job-site mentoring was equally difficult for students because of the time and travel involved.

The Final Report indicated that the development of information on responsibilities for job shadowing and mentoring and the communication of these expectations to all parties is vital to successful placement of adults in these experiences.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Superior+ for Innovation, Adaptability, and Final Report and Superior for Effectiveness. While additional detail on student success and how business help was recruited would have been helpful, Focus panel member praised the portfolio sample and student logs. "The curriculum is appropriate and easy for a tutor or teacher to use."

STILL WINNERS

The April 1997 issue of Focus featured the initial IU 5: School-To-Work project. It addressed such issues as:

- Is there a potential population of adults for which a different types of ABE service would be appropriate?
- Would the "applied" curriculum used in school-aged Tech Prep programs be viable in ABE instruction?
- Would it be possible to identify the "work ethic" skills identified as problematic by employers and to integrate instruction in those areas into an adult School-To-Work training program?

★★★ Focus on the Nation ★★★

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FROM INCARCERATION TO PRODUCTIVE LIFESTYLE

Date: 1996

Agency: Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc. 102 Mosher Rd., Glenmont, NY 12077

Contact: Barbara Smith **Phone:** 518-432-4005

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

New York State's Incarcerated Education Program for county correctional facilities, under the direction of John London of the State Department of Education (SED), consists of two interrelated sets of components. The Academic Program provides tutoring in High School subjects as well as ABE, GED, ESL, and Life Management. The Transition Program offers computerized career assessment, job readiness skills, and Action for Personal Choice (a self-awareness program developed with 353 special project funding).

The Community Services Linkages component, which continues for at least six months after release, sustains the educational, occupational, and support services provided to youth and adults while incarcerated.

With the growth of county corrections and the recent inclusion of civilian service providers as an integral part of correctional services, New York State commissioned the production of an *Orientation Model for Civil Service Providers* to help correctional facilities, school districts, BOCES, and community-based organizations work in cooperation with each other. The New York SED also put into place a peer support process, whereby Technical Assistance Teams (TAT) of experienced staff provide information gathering and problem-solving services upon request to organizations, agencies, and program providers. The *Reference Manual for Technical Assistance Teams* describes the TAT model and the procedures for carrying out the technical assistance.

CIVILIAN ORIENTATION MANUAL

This manual addresses key issues identified by focus groups as problems during the orientation of new civilian staff at correctional facilities. Sample policies and procedures as well as various inmate and facility documents are presented in nine units.

The Introduction includes screening procedures and facility access for civilian providers and a discussion of legal issues, inmate classification, and the facilities' daily operating schedule. The first four units address the facility and relationships with correctional staff. Effective Working Relationships and Problem Solving is followed by units on the security staff, facility operations and policies, and emergency procedures.

The remaining four units deal with inmate issues and cover inmate access to programs, health-related issues, and cultural diversity. The unit on "the Inner Society" discusses inmate language, games, and codes. There are eight "power" appendices including a Volunteer Handbook and Effective Communications Suggestions.

TAT REFERENCE MANUAL

The *TAT Reference Manual* defines the qualifications of TAT staff and provides a regional directory of team members. It lists the various kinds of peer assistance available and outlines the procedures to be followed during the pre-visit, visit, and follow-up phases.

Operational forms and sample letters provided in the manual include checklists for pre-visit tasks, the initial on-site visit, and follow-up. Pre-visit questions, a technical assistance log, satisfaction survey, and site visit field report are among the forms to be found on the computer disk (Word 6.0) that accompanies the manual.

FOCUS RATING

The project was rated Excellent for Innovation and Final Report and Superior for Effectiveness and Adaptability. The computer disk makes the forms easily adaptable. There are good activities for training embedded in the orientation manual. "This comprehensive manual gives you a complete overview of the issues involved in a correctional setting."

The FOCUS panel consists of:
Bootsie Barbour, Northwest Professional Development Center, Erie; **Carol Goertzel,** Wawa, Inc., Philadelphia; **Joan Leopold,** Harrisburg State Hospital; Carol Molek, TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center, Lewistown; **Jeff Woodyard,** Tri-County OIC, Inc., Harrisburg; and **Rachel Zilcosky,** Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

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BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC & LITERACY EDUCATION
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PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Special Project

This Issue:
LIFE SKILLS

FOCUS—Health

MAY 1998 VOLUME 12, NUMBER 5

Featured Projects: Health Promotion for Adult Literacy Students: Alcohol & Other Drugs and Women's Health—p.**1** • Curriculum for Adults with Special Learning Needs—p.**2** • Kentucky Competency-Based Adult Education Curriculum and Curriculum Evaluation—p.**2** • Adult Learner Skills Competencies—p.**3** • Cumberland Valley School District's High School Diploma Program for Adults—p.**4**

The special projects featured in FOCUS were funded by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education and rated according to the following criteria:

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- Materials are linked to results.
- Content is appropriate for the target audience.

ADAPTABILITY:
- Reports and/or curricula are clearly written.
- Little staff training is needed.

FINAL REPORT:
- Complete description of all products included.
- Readable, well-organized and well-presented.

ON A FIVE-POINT SCALE:
5 / Excellent • **4** / Superior • **3** / Good

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  Pennsylvania Dept. of Education
  333 Market St. 11th Fl.
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- **When requesting a project,** please refer to its name and number.
- **Out-of-state projects** may be requested from the project director or State Literacy Resource Center as listed in the contact.

Sherry Royce
Focus Editor

Tana Reiff
Focus Format

Project of Special Note

Health Promotion for Adult Literacy Students: Alcohol & Other Drugs and Women's Health

Date: 1997
Agency: Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc. 102 Mosher Rd., Glenmont, NY 12077
Contact: Barbara Smith **Phone:** 518-432-4005

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

"Alcohol and Other Drugs" and "Women's Health" are the most recent additions to New York State Education Department's exemplary *Health Promotion for Adult Literacy Students* series of workbooks and teacher's guides. Written by Mary Corrigan, with audiotapes by Kim Peavey, the "Alcohol and Other Drugs" module provides background material, information on resources, and sample lesson plans to assist adult educators in dealing with the realities of alcohol and other drug issues in the classroom.

The subject area is vast and ever changing. In order to carve out a reasonable area to cover, this module addresses these questions:

1. How do we keep track of, and make sense out of, all the different types of drugs available today?
2. What do we do if a student, or the student's family member, comes into the classroom under the influence of alcohol or drugs?
3. How do we handle counseling needs? What can we do to support recovery? What about preventing alcohol and other drug problems in the first place?

For any teacher or tutor who has encountered these issues, or addresses alcohol and drugs as a health/wellness, coping-skills topic in the classroom, this resource is a must.

"Women's Health" was a collaborative project of Robin Rischbieter and Deborah Williams, the main authors. The module takes the position that women are different from men in how they respond to medicines, drugs and alcohol, age, and stress. It provides suggestions as to how women can make informed decisions about their own health and how to successfully interact with health providers so that they receive appropriate care.

Topics covered in "Women's Health" include choosing a healthy lifestyle; making decisions about health; preventing, detecting, and treating illness; mental illness; and uniquely feminine issues such as breast care, mammograms, reproductive care, pelvic exams, vaginal and urinary-tract infections, family planning, and menopause.

Sample lessons in both modules include a stated goal, provide outcome objectives, list instructional materials and processes, and provide activities and handouts, if called for. There is a resource list, a bibliography, and a glossary.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated excellent for Innovation and Adaptability and Superior+ for Effectiveness. Comments included: "nonjudgmental, cross-cultural, practical information, good audio tape, personal issues presented in a noninvasive way."

Florida Project of Special Note

CURRICULUM FOR ADULTS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

Date: 1997
Agency: The Center for Community Education, 283 Trojan Trail, Tallahassee FL 32311-3901
Contact: Barbara Van Camp
Phone: 850-922-5343

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

This 542-page curriculum is a comprehensive resource for teachers of adults with special learning needs: mental retardation, physical impairment, learning disabilities, and mental illness.

The philosophy that drives this curriculum is a belief in empowering adults with special learning needs to achieve the highest level of functional independence and academic performance they are capable of attaining.

The activities presented in this curriculum are coordinated with the 11 functional performance standards developed by Florida in 1992. Most goals have several objectives and many of the functional-skill activities listed fulfill more than one objective.

The curriculum can readily be assimilated into any existing class for adult learners with disabilities and used as a basis for planning programs or for developing educational plans.

CONTENTS

The first two units in Part I of the *Curriculum for Adults with Special Learning Needs* introduce the life-skills approach with its emphasis on objectives and activities that are functional, are age-appropriate, and reflect transitions in the person's life. They provide an overview of the curriculum and introduce the concept of performance standards.

The next four chapters deal with definitions, symptoms, and issues affecting metal retardation, physical impairments, learning disabilities, and mental illness. The final five chapters in Part I deal with "Devising an Effective Individual Instructional Program," "Supporting Employment," "Functional Skills Development, Factors Affecting Learning," and "Adaptive Resources."

"Adaptive Resources" are classified as: providing personal assistance, modifying skills or activities, modifying the physical and social environment, and use of an adaptive or orthotic device. Appendices following Part I include general references as well as a listing of manufacturers and distributors of adaptive resources and software distributors, ranging from prosthetics to computer and educational adaptive devices.

Part B contains over 500 basic activities that build functional skills in the areas of consumer economics, community resources, health/wellness, occupational knowledge, government and law, family literacy, prose literacy, document literacy, quantitative literacy, personal-care skills, and effective social-interaction techniques.

For each objective, there are one or more activities arranged in order of difficulty. Specific competencies are listed for each activity along with a statement as to the usefulness of the activity for different populations. There is a list of performance indicators, materials needed, procedures and, in some instances, variations, discussion questions, and writing exercises.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Adaptability and Superior+ for Innovation and Effectiveness. Although it is not really keyed to lower-level learners, the panel praised its creative, easy-to-use activities. Both the academic and life skills were described as especially helpful for new teachers.

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KENTUCKY COMPETENCY-BASED ADULT EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Date: 1995
Agency: University of Kentucky, College of Education, Lexington, KY 40506
Evaluation Consultant: Dr. Edward Kifer
Project Director: Dr. Joyce Logan
Phone: 606-257-5625
Contact: Sandra Kestner **Phone:** 502-564-5114

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Kentucky Competency-Based Adult Education (KCBAE) curriculum project represents a three-year effort on the part of state staff, university professors, and adult educators in learning centers, correctional facilities, school districts, industry, and literacy programs throughout Kentucky.

The organization of committees, the design phase for the guide, and the list of competencies to be addressed were developed in the first year. During the second year, 58 curriculum guides for a minimum of three adult learner levels (Literacy, ABE, and GED) were developed along with evaluation and assessment instruments. Curriculum materials and assessment items were field-tested in 14 Kentucky and three West Virginia programs during the third year of the project.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The 595-page guide (plus appendices) goes far beyond preparing adults to pass the GED test. Its intention is to prepare Kentucky's adult citizens "to function in today's society and to meet the challenges of the 21st century." Toward that end, the curriculum encompasses not only traditional subject areas but related life skills such as critical thinking skills, self-management, interpersonal skills, and technology and tools. As a resource guide for teachers, it will be useful in matching a variety of learning activities to appropriate student goals.

The guide includes a publishers address list and an alphabetical topical index, which

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FOCUS

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Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey.
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FAX #: 717-560-9903

(circle one)
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Administration Instruction Counseling Training Curriculum Development Staff Development

Other: _____

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MAIN FUNDING SOURCE:
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Sherry Royce
FOCUS Editor
1938 Crooked Oak Drive
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references page numbers and progress benchmarks for each item.

ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDE

The KCBAE Guide is divided into 16 subject areas: communications (reading, speaking, writing); mathematics; community resources; consumer economics; cultural diversity; employability; family relationships; government/citizenship; health/wellness; home management; interpersonal/social skills; self-management; science; social studies; technology/tools; and thinking skills.

Each subject area is divided into literacy, ABE, and GED levels, and a separate section of the guide covers each level of each subject area. Learning activities are designed to integrate academic skills with life skills throughout the curriculum.

PROGRESS BENCHMARKS

Each subject area is further divided into progress benchmarks, which represent performance goals that an adult learner should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the activities. For example, the first three benchmarks under employability at the literacy level include: 1) explore interests, aptitudes, and skills; 2) identify jobs in the community; and 3) gather information about three or four jobs in the community. At the ABE level, the first three employability benchmarks become: 1) interview an employer in a career field of interest, 2) practice job interview skills, and 3) prepare a resume.

Certificates are issued when adult learners show mastery of progress benchmarks. Students are not expected to cover all learning activities and may "test out" of selected benchmarks because of prior experience or education.

THE EVALUATION PLAN

Believing that curriculum drives assessment and not vice versa, Kentucky has issued a 188-page Evaluation Plan to accompany the KCBAE Curriculum Guide. This plan is based on the assumptions that assessment must be consistent across sites, that it should reflect new modes of testing students and gathering information, that the results (scores) should be easily understood by adult learners, and that, above all, it should inform instruction.

Section A in this three-part booklet introduces the topic of assessment, explaining purpose, timing, and types of both formal and informal assessment. Section B outlines Performance Tasks for Assessment at the Literacy, ABE, and GED levels as they relate to the basic skills areas of Communication, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Section C provides duplicative performance assessments in each of these areas. In general, they state an objective; identify whether the test is to be taken by an individual, partners, or a group; list materials, preparation, and procedures; define any extension of the activity; and provide a scoring guide. This guide clearly defines outstanding, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory performance in terms of what was accomplished or not accomplished.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Excellent for Innovation and Superior+ for Effectiveness and Adaptability. Its major strength lies in its excellent benchmarks and the fact that it can be utilized at any level.

★★★ Focus on the Nation ★★★

The Focus Professional Development Project is funded not only to review and feature Pennsylvania's outstanding 353 projects in Focus Bulletins but to highlight exemplary special projects from other states as well. Areas pertinent to adult education practitioners featured in 1998 Focus Bulletins are: Family Literacy, Special Populations, Life Skills, Program Improvement, and Staff Development.

This year, 20 projects were selected as exemplary based on a five-point scale for Innovation, Effectiveness, Adaptability, and quality of Final Report. The criteria used to determine these ratings are listed on page 1 of this Bulletin. The highest rating attainable is 5—Excellent, followed by 4—Superior and 3—Good. Six additional projects with outstanding components or products but less than superior scores in any one category were accorded an Honorable Mention.

ADULT LEARNER SKILLS COMPETENCIES

HONORABLE MENTION

Project #98-7008 **Date:** 1997

Agency: Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, College of Education, The Pennsylvania State University, 102 Rackley Bldg., University Park, PA 16802

Contact: Barbara Van Horn Phone: 814-863-3777

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

With this project, Pennsylvania has taken its first step toward developing a statewide adult learner competency curriculum that can be used to plan program improvements and guide adult learner assessments. In this first year of development, the *Adult Learner Skills Competencies* report introduces competency lists and provides some suggestions for implementing them. Furthermore, the competencies outlined in this report focus on skills of adults who are native speakers of English.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

Competencies listings in this report have been developed along a three-level standard (basic or literacy level, intermediate/ABE, and advanced/GED). At each level, competencies represent skill goals that learners should accomplish before progressing to the next level. Progress is measured through formal standardized testing and informal assessment measures, as outlined in the section on "Competencies and Assessment Plans," where a brief chart and explanation illustrate the connections between skills competencies and the TABE, CASAS and Work Keys standardized assessment instruments.

A summary chart at the end of each level provides examples of the competencies as applied to three adult contexts—family member, worker, and community member/citizen. A fourth context, personal development, is included as an area of responsibility within the family member context.

The second year of this project, FY 1997-98 will flesh out these bare-bones competencies by providing a professional development module and resource guide for practitioners. The 1996-97 report is available as a PDF file at www.cas.psu.edu/docs/pde/able/ablesite.html

CUMBERLAND VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAM FOR ADULTS

Project #98-7010 **Date:** 1996-97
Agency: Cumberland Valley School District, 6746 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Contact: Samuel C. Gruber **Phone:** 717-766-0217

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Established in 1976, Cumberland Valley (CV) School District's High School Diploma Program for Adults was modeled on the competency-based diploma program pioneered by the University of Texas at Austin. Twenty years later, after graduating 800+ adults, CV's ***Project AchievE*** was funded to write a *Training Manual* and identify three educational agencies that would commit to the CV model. (See Focus, April 1997).

During 1996-97, three diverse agencies implemented their programs. Under the leadership of Richard Gacka, the Northwest Intermediate Unit established a three-way alternative diploma path at the North Coast school. Dropouts in participating school districts in Erie, Crawford, and Warren counties could elect to take GED studies, the North Coast alternative academic program, or a competency-based diploma program adapted from the CV Model.

Schuylkill Intermediate Unit 29's adult program, under the direction of Lyn Leto, decided to launch a competency-based high school diploma program for adults at an area shopping mall. A majority of Schuylkill County school districts will participate in this program that closely resembles the CV model.

Metropolitan Career Center, located in center-city Philadelphia, has adapted a model that meets the needs of the School District of Philadelphia. While the learner outcomes are closely aligned to the CV model, an emphasis on computer education was added by Philadelphia's Rhonda McClintock.

DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCT

The Final Report includes an informational packet containing a life-skills booklet, an open letter to educational agencies providing a rationale for school districts starting a high school diploma program for adults, and financial strategies for supporting such a project. There are letters from business and industry partners where instruction is offered to workers on site and tracked through individualized student portfolios.

A PowerPoint presentation outlining the program is included with the Final Report on a floppy disk.

The *AchievE Training Manual*, included with the Final Report, lists the following areas in which competencies are to be demonstrated: consumer economics, community resources, government and law, health, occupational knowledge, global studies, and writing. Success is predicated upon portfolio completion.

FOCUS RATING

This project was rated Superior+ across the board. It provides a clear step-by-step process for developing a high school diploma program in a various sites and is easily replicated.

PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR READER SURVEY FORM

Please take a few minutes to complete the Reader Survey Form enclosed with this issue of Focus and return it by June 6, 1998, to Dr. Sherry Royce, Focus Editor, 1938 Crooked Oak Dr., Lancaster, PA 17601.

Forms may be faxed to 717-560-9903.

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The FOCUS panel consists of:
Bootsie Barbour, Northwest Professional Development Center, Erie; **Carol Goertzel,** Wawa, Inc., Philadelphia; **Joan Leopold,** Harrisburg State Hospital; **Carol Molek,** TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center, Lewistown; **Jeff Woodyard,** Tri-County OIC, Inc., Harrisburg; and **Rachel Zilcosky,** Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

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